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GEN. PHILLIPS

20,000 Active Aircraft.

Modern Soviet Arms Believed Superior to Those of the U.S.

Russia's Army Digest Boasts of Completely New Postwar Arsenal — Tanks, A.A. Guns Included.

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THE SOVIET ARMY, Russia's official army information digest reported last August, "is the only major force in the world today that has a completely new postwar arsenal of weapons, is being in the hands of trained troops, capable of fighting either a nuclear or non-nuclear war, big or small, in any kind of climate or terrain."

If the Middle East situation were to blow up into a large local war, there is little question but that the Soviet army would be involved. The status of the Soviet army and supporting aviation and the military doctrines become consequently of the greatest importance.

The Russians have announced that they are holding maneuvers on the Turkish and Iranian borders between the Black and Caspian seas. They are also carrying out maneuvers with Bulgaria on the border of European Turkey, thus making a massive increase in Soviet forces in Bulgaria.

May Send Troops to Syria.

It was reported by Marquis Childs from Paris in the Post-Dispatch Tuesday that it is anticipated there that the Soviet Union will eventually send troops to Syria, possibly volunteers.

The United States Defense Department in May released an assessment by the United States Army of the Soviet army. The current issue of the Army Information Digest carries an article on "The Soviet Army in the Nuclear Era."

Another book of great value in any appraisal of the capabilities of the Soviet fighting forces is "Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age," by Raymond L. Garthoff. Garthoff, formerly with the Rand Corp., a non-profit scientific agency operated for the Air Force, previously published a study entitled "Soviet Military Doctrine." Garthoff's studies are at least as good as the evaluations of United States intelligence agencies.

From these sources can be drawn a picture of a Soviet army completely re-equipped with the most modern weapons. These weapons generally are superior to United States army weapons. They include a new heavy tank, a replacement for the Stalin tank, a new medium tank, a 100-mm. gun, 2 amphib-

ious troop carriers, amphibious self-propelled guns and anti-aircraft guns, amphibious tanks, amphibious bridge building vehicles, as well as other lesser categories.

200-Mile Cruising Range.

The Soviet medium tank, for example, is powered with a diesel engine and has a cruising range in excess of 200 miles, compared with a range of less than 100 miles for American tanks, which are powered by highly inflammable gasoline engines.

In the field of missiles and rockets designed for the support of ground forces, the Soviet designers have shown great imagination and skill. All except the largest ballistic missile are mounted on tracked vehicles that carry the crew in cabins beneath the missile.

The Russian mobile air defense rocket, capable of carrying an atomic warhead and with a range of 25 miles, is towed by a tracked vehicle carrying the launcher. The tracked prime mover also carries the crew.

The equivalent of the United States Honest John rocket is carried atop a tracklaying launcher that also carries the crew. This is much more mobile than the Honest John. While the warhead is smaller than that of the Honest John, it is large enough to carry a nuclear charge.

Rocket on Tank Chassis.

Next in power is a larger rocket with a range of 60 miles. It is mounted on a heavy tank chassis which is also the launcher. The rocket has a large warhead and obviously is intended for use as a tactical atomic weapon. It is much more mobile than the United States Corporal missile, which, while having greater range, is complicated. The Soviet 50-mile rocket uses solid propellant and thus is able to

missile for use with the field army, also mounted on a heavy tank chassis which carries the crew. This missile, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, has a range of about 60 miles. It uses solid propellant. The comparable United States missile will be the Army's Sergeant, now in the development stage.

The last and largest Soviet ballistic missile has a range of about 350 miles. It is towed on its launching chassis by a tracklaying personnel carrier that also carries the crew.

Infantry Ammunition.

In infantry weapons, the Russians have adopted one type of small arms ammunition that can be used in the carbine, the sub-machine gun and the light machine gun. The artillery is all new recoilless rifles and howitzers. The 82-mm. recoilless rifle can penetrate eight inches of armor at a quarter of a mile. The 107-mm. recoilless anti-tank gun can penetrate 10 to 12 inches of armor at half a mile.

The Russians have three types of divisions—rifle, mechanized and armored. The rifle division has a strength of about 13,000 men and includes 75 medium tanks. There are variations of the rifle division that are airborne and others for mountain warfare. All the Soviet divisions are using the three-regiment triangular formation. Supporting weapons from the division can be attached to each regiment and battalion to enable it to operate alone.

300 Tanks in Division.

The mechanized division has a strength of 15,000 men. It includes 300 medium tanks and three regiments of three motorized battalions each with one medium tank battalion and one assault gun battalion in each regiment.

The Soviet tank division of 12,500 men, with 450 tanks, has three regiments of medium tanks, a heavy tank regiment, an assault gun regiment, a mechanized regiment and a divisional rocket battalion. This type of division is employed in the Soviet mechanized army as an exploitation force in a breakthrough to destroy artillery installations and prevent reformation of defensive lines.

The army assessment of Soviet military strength credits the Soviet Union with 175 line divisions with a total strength of 2,500,000 men. In addition, there are about 40 artillery, air defense, rocket, missile and assault gun divisions that are attached to "fronts." The front, the Soviet designation of a group of divisions, is called a group

The Army assessment states that 100 Soviet divisions are rifle, airborne and mountain type, 55 are mechanized and 20 are tanks.

The Army credits the Russians with about 20,000 active aircraft in the army and navy aviation and a force of about 1,000,000 men. Navy aviation is sea based. The navy is said to have some 500 submarines, 23 modern cruisers and 120 modern destroyers.

The Army's assessment of Soviet army strength is suspect. The reason probably is that the intelligence agencies will not allow exact figures to be given, lest intelligence sources try to divide 2,500,000 men by the 115 line and support divisions, one gets a division size of 11,000 men. This obviously is inaccurate. The United States division size is about 10,000 men. There are obviously more men in the Soviet army or fewer active divisions.

Garthoff estimates that the Russians have 70 rifle divisions, 70 tank and mechanized, 40 of the various types of special support divisions and 120 cadre divisions. The latter are at nuclear strength to be filled up with reserves. He estimates the army strength to be about 2,300,000 men.

Even this estimate gives a division size of only 12,500 men, which is obviously too low. Other students do not believe the Russians maintain more than 100 full strength divisions.

Mobility Emphasized.

The Russians are prepared to fight either nuclear or non-nuclear war. Army maneuvers have stressed mobility, rapid concentration for the offensive and subsequent rapid dispersion so as not to present a target for nuclear retaliation.

Soviet military doctrine reflects the concept that the exchange of nuclear weapons will decide the war. It has decentralized its industry and its armed forces are also decentralized into nine important border military districts. The destruction of Moscow and other big cities, for example, would not knock the Soviet Union out of a war. The armed forces maintain tremendous reserves in the various autonomous districts.

In case of war, the Soviet forces are capable not only of

fighting the main battle in the West, but also would plan to take the offensive on the periphery, with Soviet forces and with Chinese, North Korean and North Vietnamese forces.

Simultaneous attacks could be expected on all United States allies—South Korea, Formosa, South Vietnam, Thailand, Iran and Turkey.

If, as the Russian planners believe, the nuclear exchange will fail to be decisive in

the entire Eurasian land mass.

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